

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

Wallowa breaks into the win column

By RONALD BOND
Wallowa County Chieftain

WALLOWA — The Wallowa Cougars not only finished on top in the Helix Basketball Tournament, but got a win in a preview of an Old Oregon League matchup, handling Griswold on Saturday, Dec. 18, 49-19.

“We went out, started off a little slow and then they picked it up,” head coach Deon Chandler said.

The matchup against the Grizzlies was never close, as Wallowa opened a 13-point first-quarter lead and added on throughout the night. The lead grew to 28-6 at halftime and remained at 22 after three quarters before the Cougars settled in for the 30-point victory.

Gabe Nobles led the way for Wallowa, as the freshman finished with 12 points, with eight of those in the first half. Isaac Barnum totaled eight points and both Willie Gibbs and Kellen Knifong scored six points.

“They really had fun (Saturday),” Chandler said. “They got a taste of a win, now they got two wins under their belt. It seems like we’re going the right way. We just gotta keep pushing hard.”

Wallowa (2-5 overall) next meets Stanfield Monday, Dec. 27, at the Bouncin’ Cancer Tournament in Echo.

Also Saturday

Imbler 36, Enterprise 33: The Enterprise boys found their offense after a first-half struggle and nearly completed a comeback in their final game at the Union Christmas Classic, but a half-court heave at the buzzer just missed as the Outlaws fell Saturday, Dec. 18, to previously winless Imbler, 36-33.

“We just couldn’t get the basketball to fall,” head coach Kyle Crawford said. “We had opportunities. Sometimes it was like defying physics. I felt like momentum was on our side (in the second half). We came within three when the fourth quarters started, and we just couldn’t get over the hump.”

Enterprise managed just four first-half field goals and found itself behind at the break, 19-9. Spencer Decker, who had



Wallowa's Gabriel Nobles shoots between a pair of Enterprise defenders Wednesday, Dec. 1, 2021.

a game-high 12 points, netted seven of them in the third quarter as the Outlaws rallied to within 24-21. They came up short, though, and slipped to their seventh straight loss.

“It’s definitely hard to come off of losses, but I think my boys and I are going to hopefully persevere,” Crawford said. “This next week, hopefully we’ll find something positive to go off of and find that elusive W.”

Gideon Gray added seven points for Enterprise (1-7 overall) who, after seeing their Monday game at Nixyaawii canceled due to road conditions, host Imbler in a rematch Wednesday, Dec. 22, in the first of three straight home contests.

Joseph 61, Grant Union 37: The Joseph boys basketball team found a rhythm after the first quarter and coasted to its second win of the season, routing Grant Union in the 13 Mile Shootout Saturday, Dec. 18, 61-37.

“We’re hopefully turning a new page,” head coach Olan Fulfer said. “We’re figuring out what we can and can’t do. We’re definitely improving really quickly, actually. One of the coaches mentioned to one of my assistants that we came (looking like) one team and left

another team.”

The Eagles turned the game around in the second quarter, pouring in 19 points to turn a five-point first quarter deficit into a 29-19 lead at the half, then broke the game wide open in the third, dropping 20 points — including 11 from Blade Suto — for a 49-27 advantage.

Three Eagles reached double figures in the scorebook, with Brad Wilcox leading the way with 16 points, including seven in the second quarter to help spark the offense.

Brad Wilcox had his best game as an Eagle,” Fulfer said. “He was aggressive going to the hole.”

Hayden Hite added 14 points — half of them in the first quarter — and Suto also had 14 points.

Joseph (2-5 overall) is off until Dec. 28 when it travels to face Ione/Arlington.

Friday

Wallowa 45, Umatilla JV 40: Wallowa got into the win column for the first time in the 2021-22 season, building an early lead against the Umatilla JV and holding on for a 45-40 win Friday, Dec. 17, at the Helix Basketball Tournament.

Wallowa held the lead most

of the night, leading by eight after one quarter, staking claim to a 20-15 halftime lead and continuing to hold a 36-30 margin after three quarters. Umatilla hung tight in the second half before the Cougars held on.

“I think they came within one or two,” head coach Deon Chandler. “I talked to the guys, called a timeout. We had three bad passes that they went down and scored on. (After that) they went out and took care of business. ... We pulled out the W. It was a really exciting game for them.”

The Cougars got a big night from Isaac Barnum as the 6-foot-4 freshman had his best scoring effort of the season, finishing with 17 points, including 13 in the second half.

“He probably had about 20 rebounds. He played one heck of a game,” Chandler said.

Gabe Nobles added 10 points and Ryder Goller scored nine points.

Prairie City 64, Joseph 58: The Joseph boys basketball team nearly completed a comeback from a 16-point first-quarter deficit before falling to Prairie City, 64-58, Friday night, Dec. 17, in their first game of

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Cougars earn two easy victories

By RONALD BOND
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WALLOWA — The Wallowa Cougars locked up a victory in an Old Oregon League preview game, knocking off Helix Tournament host Griswold, 46-19, on Saturday, Dec. 18.

After a first quarter that saw Wallowa lead 12-6, the Cougars broke the game open in the second to take a commanding 33-10 lead at the break. Zoe Hermens scored all 13 of her points in the second to power the offensive surge.

“I saw some good things,” head coach Greg Oveson said of the weekend. “Can we keep building on (it)? I sure hope so. I saw us do something — we actually ran an offense some the other night. That’s been a real struggle. I think we’re getting better. We don’t have a game next week, but the next we have Stanfield, Condon and Sherman.”

Sophie Moeller scored 16 points to lead the Wallowa offense, netting 10 of those points in the opening half. Wallowa also got six points from both Haley Brockamp and Abby Straight.

The win, which was Wallowa’s second in a row, marked the first time the Cougars had back-to-back wins since late in the 2019-2020 season.

Wallowa (4-3 overall) is off until Monday, Dec. 27, when it plays Stanfield at Echo’s Bouncin’ Cancer Tournament.

I thought the girls did a pretty good job,” Oveson said. “Hopefully those last three preseason games we’ll find out where we are.”

Also Saturday

Union 45, Enterprise 36: The Enterprise girls basketball team controlled the first half of action

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WRESTLING

Outlaws get two second-place finishers at Elgin, tie for sixth

By RONALD BOND
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ELGIN — Enterprise saw two wrestlers go undefeated during round-robin action at the John Rysdam Memorial Tournament in Elgin on Friday, Dec. 17, then had two second-place finishes and a third-place finisher Saturday, Dec. 18.

As a team, the Outlaws tied for sixth with 43 points on Saturday.

Teagan Evans went 1-1 Friday at 145 pounds, earning a 5-4 sudden victory over Weiser, Idaho’s Aaron Despain, and dropping a 6-1 decision to Pine Eagle’s Will Seggerman. Saturday, Evans took second at the same weight, edging Pine Eagle’s Cohen Simpson by a 5-3 decision, topping Despain again, this time by a 10-2 major decision in the semifinals, and then falling to Seg-



Ronald Bond/Wallowa County Chieftain, File
Tegan Evans, bottom, of Enterprise, is shown wrestling during the Enterprise Kickoff on Friday, Dec. 3, 2021.

german again, this time in the finals by fall.

Gabby De Lapena went 2-1 in the girls division Friday, dropping a match by fall to Weiser’s Audrey Deleon, earning a 10-5 decision over Grant Union’s June Wolf, and defeating Grant Union’s

Majors Morgan. Saturday, she wrestled the same competitors to similar outcomes to take second. She dropped a match to Deleon by a 15-0 technical fall, then pinned Wolf and wrapped things up with a pin of Morgan.

Cody Fent (170B) won

three matches Friday, pinning Sean Peden of Elgin, Riddick Hutchison of Grant Union and Ryan Brown of Baker. He followed on Saturday by taking fourth in the 170-pound bracket. He again pinned Peden in the quarterfinals, but lost to Justin Hodge of Grant Union by fall in the semifinals. In another rematch, he pinned Brown to reach the third-place match, and there lost by fall to Willie Sudderth of Weiser.

Gunnar McDowell won two matches in the 220B class Friday, pinning both Ryan Jackson-Nelson of Union/Cove and Billy Kargianis of Baker. On Saturday, McDowell placed third at 220 pounds. He pinned James Dempsey of Union/Cove, lost by fall to Weiser’s Rylee Willet, then pinned Jackson-Nelson again before finally earning a 4-1

decision over La Grande’s Noah McIlmoil in the third-place match.

Will Ogden went 2-1 in the 195B class Friday, pinning Weiser’s Alonzo Salinas and Grant Union’s Sam McCracken, and losing by fall to Calvin Clapperton of Weiser. Saturday, Ogden went 1-2 in the 195 bracket with a loss to Weiser’s Caleb Grove by fall before another pin of Salinas. He was bumped in the consolation semifinals by Union/Cove’s David Creech by fall.

Pearce Schnetzky went 1-2 at 138 Friday, losing two matches by fall and earning a win by medical forfeit. Saturday, he dropped two matches, again by fall.

For Joseph, Jayden McNall (120) and Aiden Clary (182B) had the strongest efforts Friday, both going 1-2. McNall dropped matches by fall to Luke

Sarich and Elvis Williams, both of Weiser, and earned a win by fall over Elgin’s Joshua Wilson. Clary dropped a match by fall to Baker’s Ethan Morgan, defeated Grant Union’s Ryan Coombs by a 12-2 major decision, and lost to La Grande’s Payton Stenkamp by a 6-1 decision.

Megan Brock in the girls division, and Gavin Russell at 160, both went 0-2, and Dylan Rogers at 132B went 0-3, though one was a tight 9-8 decision loss to Baker’s Riley Martin.

Saturday, Rogers went 1-2 at 132. He dropped a match by fall to Baker’s Sam Nelson, but then wrestled Nelson again, and this time won by fall. He was eliminated from the bracket by Pine Eagle’s James Denison by fall.

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and Happy New Year!

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